



The Woodsy Owl Program Strategic Plan

Table of Contents

Page

1. Executive Summary

1.1	Objective	3
1.2	Where We've Been – The Background	3
1.3	Where We Are – The Need for a Change.....	4
1.4	Where We're Going – The Strategic Planning Process	4

2. New Strategies for the Woodsy Owl program

2.1	Woodsy Owls in the Current Environment.....	6
2.1.1	The World Woodsy Lives In.....	6
2.1.2	The FS Today.....	7
2.1.3	Woodsy Owl Program Successes	8
2.1.4	Program Areas to be Improved.....	9
2.2	The Woodsy Owl Mission Statement.....	11
2.2.1	Program Components Supporting this Mission: Public Service Advertising and Licensing.....	12
2.3	The Vision for the Year 2006.....	12
2.3.1	Program Policy and Administration.....	12
2.3.2	Education Programs	13
2.3.3	Training	13
2.3.4	Branding	13
2.3.5	Internal Marketing.....	13
2.3.6	External Marketing.....	13
2.3.7	Monitoring and Evaluation	13
2.3.8	Woodsy Owl Website	14

3. Areas of Emphasis and Action Plans

3.1	Emphasis Area #1: Program Policy and Administration	15
3.2	Emphasis Area #2: Education Program.....	15
3.3	Emphasis Area #3: Training	16
3.4	Emphasis Area #4: Branding.....	16

Table of Contents Continued

	Page
3.5 Emphasis Area #5: Internal Marketing.....	17
3.6 Emphasis Area #6: External Marketing	17
3.7 Emphasis Area #7: Monitoring and Evaluation	17
3.8 Emphasis Area #8: Woodsy Owl Website	18

Appendices

Appendix A - Woodsy Owl Strategic Planning Session Participants	19
Appendix B - What is going well with the Woodsy Owl Program?	21
Appendix C - The World Woodsy Owl Lives In.....	22
Appendix D - What needs to be improved in the Woodsy Owl Program?	25
Appendix E - Core Audience	26
Appendix F - Vision for the Year 2006	28

1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1.1 Objective

The objectives of The Woodsy Owl Program Strategic Plan are to identify trends and events that are affecting the Woodsy Owl program and to chart a strategic plan of action that will lead to a desired future condition.

1.2 *Where We've Been* – The Background

During the late 1960's, the American public began to develop an increased awareness of the importance of protecting and preserving all aspects of the Earth's environment. In the 1970's, a group of USDA FS (FS) personnel identified the need for a symbol that could be the focus for a national environmental improvement campaign—similar to the use of Smokey Bear as the symbol for the national fire prevention campaign.

The Woodsy Owl character evolved following the analysis of the results from testing and researching with children by FS personnel and several volunteers in the advertising and marketing business. These same volunteers developed prototype artwork, posters, and a variety of other early Woodsy Owl campaign materials.

September 15, 1971, marked the official launch of Woodsy Owl, and a public service advertising campaign was developed for television, radio stations, and print media shortly thereafter.

The Act of Congress of June 22, 1974, also known as the Woodsy Owl Act, declares the Woodsy Owl name, character, and slogan as property of the United States, authorizes the collection of royalties for commercial use of the Woodsy Owl symbol and the slogan "Give a Hoot don't Pollute," and recognizes the Woodsy Owl environmental program as a public service campaign to promote wise use of the environment and programs which foster maintenance and improvement of environmental quality.

Woodsy's fame and popularity continued to resonate strongly with the public for more than a decade. Over ninety percent of the American public with children under the age of ten recognized Woodsy and his slogan in the 1980's. Many federal, state, and local government agencies regularly used the FS's Woodsy Owl materials. Many teachers used the materials in their classrooms, and other youth group leaders promoted Woodsy as a preeminent environmental improvement symbol.

In the early 1990's, the USDA FS conducted a national survey with the purpose of updating previous statistics used in the Woodsy Owl literature by measuring the awareness of Woodsy Owl and his slogan: "Give A Hoot. Don't Pollute." This coordinated effort was conducted to improve both the physical image of Woodsy Owl and the content of his message. As a result, his appearance was changed to be more appealing to the new

generation of children, and his message was broadened to “Lend a Hand - Care for the Land,” with the purpose of expanding his role as America’s official environmental icon.

Since Woodsy’s official re-launch on Earth Day 1997, administrative changes, resource downsizing, and budget cuts have had a negative impact on the delivery of Woodsy Owl’s message and image.

1.3 Where We Are – The Need For A Change

As we begin the new millennium, the FS considers it necessary to revisit the current effectiveness of the Woodsy Owl program, with a specific focus on the elements that have helped to make it successful, and the elements that need to be improved in order to obtain desired results. The conclusions of these actions and studies will help us to determine the course of action to be taken in order to enhance Woodsy Owl’s image, slogan, and program deliverables.

1.4 Where We’re Going – The Strategic Planning Process

In July 2001, the FS conducted a strategic planning session to determine the path that the agency should follow to improve the delivery of program services and materials designed to enhance and strengthen Woodsy Owl’s image and the message of “Lend a Hand - Care for the Land.” This document represents the results of that session. It is a “living document” that will be used, revisited, and revised as needed and as circumstances change.

The Woodsy Owl Strategic Planning Session was based on the following conceptual foundation:

1. Understanding the environment in which this effort exists – what are the trends, events, opportunities, and issues—both internal and external—that are influencing or driving the need for this effort?
2. Clarifying the mission and purpose of this effort.
3. Describing a “desired future” (our vision) that speaks to outcomes of this effort within a specific time frame. This is the aspect that separates “strategic” planning from operational or tactical planning: defining desired results before discussing how to get there.
4. Comparing the desired future to the current situation, and determining the most significant gaps – in what areas are we far from where we need to be? How far? Will closing the gap make a significant difference?
5. Determining areas of emphasis for the near term, so that we know where to begin our efforts as we move toward the desired future.

6. Determining specifically what needs to be accomplished in order to make the desired progress. This is “action planning” – who will do what task, by when; and what it will cost in dollars, resources, and time.

This document is organized according to these principles and will explain exactly *Where We’re Going*. Detailed input from the July 2001 session can be found in the appendices, along with a list of the participants.

Our sincere thanks to Pam Godsey, former manager of the FS Conservation Education (CE) Program, for her invaluable contribution to our understanding of the history, vision, and value of the Woodsy Owl Program. A special thank you, as well, to Neil Howe, co-author of the book “Millennials Rising,” for his insightful presentation on the importance of understanding generational influences and trends in the formulation of strategic plans. The information and expertise provided by both of these individuals helped set the stage for what all participants agreed was an exciting and productive strategic session.

2. NEW STRATEGIES FOR THE WOODSY OWL PROGRAM

2.1 Woodsy Owl in the Current Environment—an Overview

2.1.1 The World Woodsy Lives In

In order to craft a strategy for future action, it is imperative to thoroughly analyze the current cultural and political environment, paying special attention to trends, events, issues, and opportunities that could potentially affect the program. This section details the results of the team's discussions regarding all aspects of the current Woodsy Owl program, including a review of the program's successes and a focus on areas needing improvement. Raw contributions from participants are recorded in the Appendices B, C, D, and E as they were shared during the session.

In general terms, Americans over the past few decades have developed greater interest in caring for the environment and have become more involved in what they can do to protect the nation's natural and cultural resources. The fact is that today, more than ever before, parents and teachers are engaging children at very early ages in land ethics. They do this by using simple activities that span from the discovery of the world around them to the practice of the basic activities of conservation: reuse, reduce, and recycle.

At the same time, the socio-economic structure of the American society has become more diverse. The number of immigrants with different land ethics and values has increased. This difference represents a challenge to all of us as we determine the methods we use to approach these various groups and communities.

Our audience is more diverse in many ways. To meet the needs of people with special needs and/or disabilities, information should be available and/or compatible with systems these individuals use to access information. Having information in alternative languages for the vision impaired and other special needs is required by law (PWD Act) and is the right thing to do.

One of the most significant aspects of the current social environment is the emergence of a new generation. We are looking at a new generation of kids whose interests and values differ from previous generations. Today's kids, "Millennials," are more sophisticated and team oriented. They want to be mentored. Neil Howe and William Strauss in their latest book, *"Millennials Rising: the Great Next Generation,"* describe this generation:

"Millennials are more numerous, affluent and better educated, and more ethnically diverse. More important, they are beginning to manifest a wide array of positive social habits that older Americans no longer associate with youth, including new focus on team work, achievement, modesty and good conduct." (Strauss and Howe, p4).

They describe this group as optimists, cooperative team players, and environmentally aware. Millennials accept authority. They trust and feel close to their parents. Millennials

are true followers. They are considered the most watched-over generation in memory due to the increase in parental supervision and the after-school programs that are often led by a guardian. Millennials are smart. In sum, Millennials believe in the future and see themselves on the cutting edge.

They are fascinated with new technology. Today's kids are mostly visual learners. This generation has computer learning programs and games at their disposal. They face a world that is focused on edutainment marketing techniques and has theme channels available for their special interests (i.e.: Discovery, Animal Planet, Cartoon Network, etc).

In the education arena, the government has focused on increasing the reading ability of students at all levels. Teaching has been directed towards using standardized tests and correlation with standards. There has also been an increase in after-school and developmental programs.

2.1.2 The FS Today

In the New Century of Service strategic plan, there is a paragraph that well describes how the FS role has evolved over the years. It reads as follows:

When the Forest Service was small, it operated out of small offices embedded in local communities. In this environment the agency was able to establish relationships and a solid reputation with local citizens. These local residents who have made their living from forest products rely on this income. When this is taken away or made more difficult, distrust and disconnection with the FS ensues. Now, urban growth and the rapid movement of employees has led, in some cases, to loss of connection with and trust in the agency and its management policies and practices. The FS is often seen as reactive, not proactive. It is also seen as being managed more frequently from higher levels that are more political, not at the local levels, and being buffeted by organized special interest groups. Fewer dollars are reaching ranger districts and local communities and many ranger districts have been consolidated or eliminated in recent years. The agency needs to clarify its role in communities small and large, close and distant, especially as commodity production shifts to the private sector.” (NCS Strategic Plan p.4)

As a result of the 2000 election, changes are expected in terms of the role of government in our society. There is a new administration interested in increasing funding to field units and decreasing the size of the headquarters and regional offices across the nation.

In 1999, the FS increased its commitment to improve the delivery of the agency's CE programs by officially establishing the CE staff under the State and Private Deputy area. There is a CE component in every single natural and cultural resource management program in the agency. The CE staff has proven its effectiveness by dedicating itself to developing innovative ways to promote CE and by strengthening the network of regional CE coordinators. The CE staff increased partnerships with major national teaching and learning institutions and interest groups. It also increased participation in interagency groups to support the establishment of theme- oriented interagency programs. And, most importantly,

CE has developed tools and materials for field offices and teachers to use with their students. The CE staff has supported the National Symbols program through efforts to increase program effectiveness and deliverables. The CE staff support of the Woodsy Owl strategic planning session is an example of their commitment to the development of the Woodsy Owl conservation program.

The list of community characteristics that help describe the environment in which Woodsy lives is included in Appendix C. Characteristics listed by the participants in the July, 2001, strategic planning session would probably be different if they were to be listed by the same group of participants now, in light of the events occurred in New York City, Pennsylvania, and Washington, DC on September 11, 2001.

2.1.3 Woodsy Owl Program Successes—a Summary

The FS has a valuable and recognized symbol in the character of Woodsy Owl. For 30 years, Woodsy Owl has been America's original and official environmental icon, whose PSA campaign through the Advertising Council in the early 1970's endeared him to millions of Americans—children and adults alike. As a matter of fact, in November 1994, Cartoon Q Rating found that Woodsy Owl had an overall recognition factor of 76% and was considered a "favorite character" by 31% of the households surveyed.

In preparation for the environmental conservation challenges that face our children in the new century, the FS, in partnership with Children's Television Workshop, gave Woodsy Owl a wonderfully appealing new design, look, and message. "Lend A Hand – Care For The Land" is a broad-based environmental message that can be continually adapted to the programs and goals of the FS as they continue to meet the challenge of their guiding philosophy of "Caring for the Land and Serving the People." This facilitates his integration into any management program sponsored by the agency. Field units, at the Forest and District levels, use Woodsy Owl on a regular basis to promote land ethics and conservation values among their customers and special program participants. Woodsy Owl visibility is due largely to the use of this symbol by agency officials in national events, modest community events, TV public service announcements, and events coordinated by field offices. These appearances, complemented by the distribution of Woodsy Owl supplies (rulers, small garbage bags, pencils, and the like), reinforce the spread of Woodsy's image and message among the event's participants.

The Woodsy Owl program effectiveness with children has been proven over the years. This success is mostly due to Woodsy Owl's legal recognition and the easy nature of his goal and motto. Woodsy Owl is America's symbol for conservation, as stated in the Woodsy Owl Act of 1974. The law not only validates Woodsy Owl's message, but also sets the stage for the development of a licensing program that can help financially support future program deliverables.

The idea of having a national symbol for conservation has been embraced by teachers and group leaders nationwide. The Woodsy Owl symbol is helpful when addressing the discovery of nature's wonders and how to take care of their environment with young

children. The Woodsy Owl image and message, “Lend a Hand – Care for the Land,” is easy to use and easy to integrate into any educational program focusing on conservation.

In addition, the recognition of Woodsy Owl as the American symbol for conservation has been augmented by the support that the symbol has received over the years from celebrity figures and private corporations. Thanks to this support, Woodsy Owl’s visibility increased dramatically in the 1970’s and 1980’s. This fact has been critical in the program’s success and effectiveness.

The list of Woodsy Owl program successes as discussed in the Strategic Planning Session is included in Appendix B.

2.1.4 Program Areas to Be Improved

The team identified the following program areas as needing improvement: policy and administration, educational programs, training opportunities, branding, marketing (internal and external), monitoring and evaluation, and the Woodsy Owl website.

In the area of policy and administration, the Woodsy Owl Program is in need of leadership support. This support should be a commitment from the FS leadership to include the symbol in major agency documents and to refer and recognize Woodsy Owl as the national symbol for conservation. The program could also require a commitment of funding to develop strategies that would put Woodsy Owl back in primetime on major national TV stations. The team identified the need to encourage agency leadership to understand that the Woodsy Owl program is key in the development of conscientious youth who will practice desirable environmental behavior in the future. Team members recommended looking for a professional opinion on how Woodsy Owl can do this for us in a market that has been flooded with cartoon characters.

There are some issues in the program that are in need of clarification. For instance, the team identified the need to establish an official policy on the use of Woodsy Owl’s official slogan. The program should explain why it is using the “Lend a Hand – Care for the Land” slogan instead of the one established by the Congressional Act: “Give A Hoot. Don’t Pollute!” It is important that users of Woodsy understand that our current slogan embraces a broader conservation message.

Another aspect in need of clarification is to define the role of the National Association of State Foresters (NASF) in the Woodsy Owl program. This issue was defined by NASF itself a year after the strategic meeting took place. By written communication, NASF decided not to be involved and/or support the FS Woodsy Owl conservation program; however, states that are interested in supporting the program can continue to do so. In addition, the State and Private Deputy received a letter from NASF in June 2002 stating that their Cache will no longer carry Woodsy Owl products once the current products they have in stock are sold.

When addressing the area of education, the team recognized that Woodsy Owl is a tool that teachers and team leaders can use to address conservation issues with young children.

Woodsy has the potential to become a key component of the CE program, and should be used as the starting point of conservation efforts with the new generation. The team insisted that the Woodsy Owl program should develop educational activities and products that can be used by FS employees, partners, and caregivers. Those activities and products should be tiered to national educational standards for the education of young children.

In the area of training opportunities, the team identified the need to develop a training program involving the use of Woodsy Owl products and activities to improve the effectiveness of conservation programs. This training program will be available to field employees and partners in the area of conservation. The team recommended this training program will be accessible online.

In the area of branding, the team recognized the need to refine the Woodsy Owl costume. There are several issues associated with the existing costume. For instance, the costume is limited in terms of its wear ability. You will have to be a specific size and body shape to wear the costume. There is also the fact that Woodsy Owl's look is not appealing to our audience. It does not look wise. The team recommended hiring a contractor to analyze the costume and recommend actions to improve its wear ability and looks. Efforts need to be oriented towards improving Woodsy's image, making it more appealing to our core audience. Branding also includes the development of Cache products and educational materials. The Woodsy Owl program needs to include CE messages in the Cache products to increase their educational value. Efforts should be oriented to have such tools more accessible to our partners and employees.

Marketing is another area of great importance, both internal and external. There is the need to develop a communications plan for the Woodsy Owl program. The plan will help identify internal and external customers and define strategies to approach them effectively. To improve internal marketing, the team suggested publicizing stories and sharing them with our employees and partners. Also, the team identified the need to set an internal network of Woodsy Owl program coordinators to improve communications between the National Symbols staff at the Washington Office and field offices (regional, forest, and district levels.) The establishment of roles and responsibilities of the Woodsy Owl field coordinators will help promote and enhance the use of Woodsy Owl as America's conservation icon.

When addressing external marketing, the team identified the need to work closely with the Woodsy Owl program contractor for advisory and marketing, to get Woodsy Owl back on prime time TV. They insisted on the need to develop an aggressive public service campaign and a strong licensing program. The team recommended the establishment of partnerships with major educational organizations, other federal agencies, and private corporations.

To validate the program, the team suggested the establishment of a mechanism to continuously monitor the program and product successes, and identify and evaluate areas where improvement is needed.

The team recommended the development of a Woodsy Owl website for our core audience. The Woodsy Owl website will have games, educational activities, and conservation messages for young kids. The site can provide access to useful tools and tips for teachers

and caregivers on how to design and develop indoor and outdoors activities with children using Woodsy Owl's products.

A complete list of areas to be improved as stated by team members is included in Appendix D.

2.2 The Woodsy Owl Mission Statement

"The purpose of the Woodsy Owl program is to help young children discover the natural world and join in life-long actions to care for that world."

The Woodsy Owl program can accomplish this mission by making Woodsy Owl the eco-entertainment children's icon for the 21st century. Recent surveys confirm that concern for the environment remains one of the most important issues for children today. Classroom curricula throughout the country focus on the environment and help educate the nation's children about what they can do to help care for the land and save the planet. Woodsy Owl program materials can be an important component of this effort.

Some studies show that many parents have acknowledged that their understanding of environmental concerns has been broadened through their child's classroom learning. It is our intent that the Woodsy Owl program help instill life-long conservation and stewardship of the land values in a new generation of children and, by extension, their families as well.

The Woodsy Owl program will focus on young children. Our core audience will remain children from pre-kindergarten to 3rd grade. Early childhood has been identified by many behavioral researches as the critical stage for instilling long lasting values in an individual. A study that reflects this theory is the one conducted at Harvard University by Singley and Anderson on transfer learning. In their study called *The Transfer of Cognitive Skills*, they stated:

"Effective education curriculum encourages students to transfer information that they are learning from one context to another. Transfer is important at the early childhood level for environmental education because early childhood is a key period in the formation of environmental attitudes. Effective environmental education should provide a knowledge base that is age appropriate encourages children's active participation and occurs in real settings".

The team recommended young children as the Woodsy Owl program core audience. Young children can start embracing and empowering conservation ethics in their early childhood and continue it throughout their lives. That way, we will have generations of land stewards that can support the FS in the advocacy of a conservation ethic to promote health, productivity, diversity, and beauty of forests and associated lands.

Special efforts will be conducted in order to attract and involve "gate-keepers" (school teachers, after-school program leaders, group leaders, and the like) in the various programs and activities developed through the Woodsy Owl program.

2.2.1 Program Components Supporting this Mission: Public Service Advertising (PSA) and Licensing

The FS is keenly aware of the importance and impact of PSA. As the main symbol in the Advertising Council's longest running public service campaign for over 50 years, Smokey Bear's message has reached several generations of Americans and helped the FS in its vital fire prevention work. By following this model, the development of a character, logo, or trademark-licensing program built on a strong foundation of PSA exposure has shown desired resource management results, such as a reduction of child caused fires. The national print and media exposure built into a PSA campaign are designed to reach nearly every household in America. A manufacturer wanting to capitalize on the recognition or "brand" identity of a character or logo will enter into a licensing arrangement and pay a royalty fee to use that image or logo to sell more of their product than their competition sells.

The FS is right on the environmental target with Woodsy Owl for a long-term PSA campaign. This campaign has the ability to attain the high levels of overall awareness of the Smokey Bear Campaign and attract the interest and participation of key corporations and associations in an overall Woodsy Owl Marketing and Licensing Program.

In the face of continuing budget cutbacks, and with the growing appreciation for the mutually beneficial relationship that can be developed between government and the private sector, the licensing of Woodsy Owl merchandise provides the FS with an opportunity to generate royalty revenue to help subsidize important programs and services currently strapped under fiscal financial restraints.

2.3 The Vision for the Year 2006

This section details the best ideas that surfaced during the session regarding the "desired future condition" envisioned for the Woodsy Owl program by the year 2006.

These are ambitious goals that show the high expectations this dedicated group of FS professionals and state representatives have come to believe that the Woodsy Owl program can ultimately attain giving leadership endorsement, staff, and infrastructure.

We have grouped these ideas under the following eight umbrella headings:

2.3.1 Program Policy and Administration

The Woodsy Owl program will enjoy financial viability supported by a healthy budget, grants from involved partners, and successful licensees. Program guidelines are established to facilitate management decisions in budget spending and funding use. Agency leadership supports and recognizes Woodsy Owl as America's icon for conservation and includes it in all agency publications. A national coordinator will oversee a network of champions dedicated to promote Woodsy Owl and his conservation message.

2.3.2 Education Programs

Woodsy Owl conservation messages meet national educational standards and are featured in a variety of outlets including the Internet, television shows, children's literature, and school curricula. Woodsy Owl materials are used to deliver CE messages and to complement existing school curricula. Woodsy Owl products are easy to obtain by caregivers and agency (federal and state) employees, and are integrated into existing lesson plans and school programs.

2.3.3 Training

Agency personnel (federal and state) are trained on how to use and customize Woodsy Owl products and materials for their educational and interpretive programs. Partners are also using the Train the Trainer program to use Woodsy Owl products and activities to promote stewardship on national forest lands.

2.3.4 Branding

Woodsy Owl is a recognized and beloved figure. His image appears wherever appropriate land stewardship messages are promoted, and evokes a sense of empowerment and ownership in conservation among youngsters and adults alike. Woodsy joins with environmental leaders to reach large audiences and sponsors conservation events across the Nation. Woodsy Owl costume fits people of different sizes and body shapes.

2.3.5 Internal Marketing

FS employees value Woodsy Owl's message and connect his image with our agency's resources and stewardship responsibilities. Program delivery is enthusiastically supported. Woodsy Owl is recognized as an important part of our FS history, even while he carries us into the New Century of Service as the symbol of our conservation leadership.

2.3.6 External Marketing

Woodsy Owl is the icon of choice for public and private entities wishing to promote an environmental message. Woodsy Owl image appears and effectively delivers land stewardship messages at popular national and international conservation oriented events. Diverse constituencies such as, television executives, educators, and the business community embrace his message.

2.3.7 Monitoring and Evaluation

The Woodsy Owl program's progress is monitored and shared regularly with the field through local and regional coordinators. Success is defined by a public positive view of the FS as a responsible professional steward of the national resources and by the increasing demand for Woodsy Owl activities and educational programs

2.3.8 Woodsy Owl Web Site

The Woodsy Owl web site generates a sense of wonder, awareness and concern for the environment that motivates children, parents, and teachers to become more environmentally responsible. The site instills a definition of stewardship to its users and guide users to enact stewardship activities in their personal lives.

3. AREAS OF EMPHASIS AND STRATEGIES

In comparing **Woodsy Owl in the Current Environment (section 2.1)** to the **Vision for Year 2006 (section 2.3)**, the team identified gaps that need to be closed to move the Vision forward over the next few years. Emphasis will be placed on the following areas:

Emphasis Area #1: Program Policy and Administration

Vision: The Woodsy Owl program will enjoy financial viability supported by a healthy budget, grants from involved partners, and successful licensees. Program guidelines are established to facilitate management decisions in budget spending and funding use. Agency leadership supports and recognizes Woodsy Owl as America's icon for conservation and includes it in all agency publications. A national coordinator will oversee a network of champions dedicated to promote Woodsy Owl and his conservation message.

Strategy #1 – Develop a 3-year plan of work and define funding and staffing needs based on that work plan.

Strategy #2 – Identify Woodsy Owl field coordinators and define their roles and responsibilities.

Strategy #3 – Establish a communication network of a manageable size among educators, stakeholders, partners, and delivery partners. Explore and develop additional partners to fund and deliver the Woodsy Owl program.

Strategy #4 – Develop a national survey to define viability of Woodsy Owl's image, character identity, educational message, and define the marketing niche for the program.

Strategy #5 – Identify the areas in need of clarification and issue policy statements for our employees and partners.

Strategy #6 – Institutionalize a Planning Cycle.

Emphasis Area #2: Education Programs

Vision: Woodsy Owl conservation messages meet national educational standards and are featured in a variety of outlets including the Internet, television shows, children's literature, and school curricula. Woodsy Owl materials are used to deliver CE messages and to complement existing school curricula. Woodsy Owl products are easy to obtain by caregivers and agency (federal and state) employees, and are integrated into existing lesson plans and school programs.

Strategy #1 – Incorporate an Activity Guide, plus education materials, into the existing, validated, environmental education program training sessions (for instance: Project Learning Tree (PLT), Project WET, and Project Wild) by age group as appropriate.

Strategy #2 – Develop a Woodsy Owl Service Guide that has relevance to the FS and partners in the program. Service learning is a new way or method of teaching through community service and volunteerism. Schools are pushing the concept and seeking community projects for their students to work through and learn from. With the Woodsy Owl program, we envision offering service learning projects to schools that will teach kids to care for the land, such as: trail work, litter patrols, erosion control projects, tree planting, and the like.

Strategy #3 – Develop a partnership with PLT and/or other educational organizations to improve the educational value of Woodsy Owl products.

Emphasis Area #3: Training

Vision: Agencies personnel (federal and state) are trained on how to use and customize Woodsy Owl products and materials for their educational and interpretive programs.

Partners are also using the Train the Trainer program to use Woodsy Owl products and activities to promote stewardship on national forest lands.

Strategy #1 – Develop a Train the Trainer program (on-line and hard copy based) by which employees and partners will learn how to use Woodsy Owl materials and products to increase the effectiveness of their educational programs.

Strategy #2 – Complete a costume box containing Woodsy Owl materials (i.e. guidelines, an Activity Guide, a Woodsy Owl video, sample “scenarios”, etc.) and encourage sharing experiences on the website <http://www.symbols.gov/>.

Strategy #3 – Promote communication between educators and all Woodsy Owl users and determine what is working and what needs to be improved.

Emphasis Area #4: Branding

Vision: Woodsy Owl is a recognized and beloved figure. His image appears wherever appropriate land stewardship messages are promoted, and evokes a sense of empowerment and ownership in conservation among youngsters and adults alike. Woodsy Owl joins with environmental leaders to reach large audiences and sponsors conservation events across the Nation. Woodsy Owl costume fits people of different sizes and body shapes.

Strategy #1 – In order to create a more demand for Woodsy Owl products, a Brand Marketing Plan will be developed which will include Woodsy Owl’s message and relevance to our agency and partners and outline how he can add value for the audience identified in this Plan.

Strategy #2 – Define subtle changes to Woodsy Owl’s costume, which would reflect a wiser, more mature, mentoring type of personality. Initial ideas revolve around redesigning his eyes and his clothing (the recommendation is that this be undertaken without much additional research regarding field input). This needs to be accompanied by an analysis on the up grading costs of existing costumes at the field level.

Strategy #3 – Revisit professionally suggested changes and conduct a pilot/field test to measure acceptability.

Strategy #4 – Develop a communication plan to share changes in the costume and funding methods through Woodsy Owl Coordinators.

Strategy #5 – Establish the guidelines for a strong and effective Woodsy Owl licensing program. This program will have a monitoring and accountability system, to monitor its effectiveness and progress.

Emphasis Area #5: *Internal Marketing*

Vision: FS employees value Woodsy Owl's message and connect his image with our agency's resources and stewardship responsibilities. Program delivery is enthusiastically supported. Woodsy Owl is recognized as an important part of our FS history, even while he carries us into the New Century of Service as the symbol of our conservation leadership.

Strategy #1 – Establish a network of field Woodsy Owl program coordinators that can help support Woodsy Owl initiatives at the field level.

Strategy #2 – Get the agency's leadership and the Washington Office employees excited about working more intensively with Woodsy.

Emphasis Area #6: *External Marketing*

Vision: Woodsy Owl is the icon of choice for public and private entities wishing to promote an environmental message. Woodsy Owl image appears and effectively delivers land stewardship messages at popular national and international conservation oriented events. Diverse constituencies such as, television executives, educators, and the business community embrace his message.

Strategy #1 – Develop a communications plan for the Woodsy Owl program to identify potential external partners for the Woodsy Owl program.

Emphasis Area #7: *Monitoring and Evaluation*

Vision: The Woodsy Owl program's progress is monitored and shared regularly with the field through local and regional coordinators. Success is defined by a public positive view of the FS as a responsible professional steward of the national resources and by the increasing demand for Woodsy Owl activities and educational programs.

Strategy #1 – Develop a Monitoring Plan to update the path of the Woodsy Owl program.

Strategy #2 – Work with educational organizations to identify monitoring procedures on Woodsy Owl's activity guides.

Emphasis Area #8: Woodsy Owl Website

Vision: *The Woodsy Owl web site generates a sense of wonder, awareness and concern for the environment that motivates children, parents, and teachers to become more environmentally responsible. The site instills a definition of stewardship to its users and guide users to enact stewardship activities in their personal lives.*

Strategy #1 – Work with Woodsy Owl program advisory contractor to complete the Woodsy Owl website (www.woodyowl.com)

Strategy #2 – Develop a plan for overseeing the maintenance of the website.

Strategy #3 – Develop a CD-ROM containing activities from the website.

4. APPENDICES

Appendix A—WOODSY OWL STRATEGIC PLANNING SESSION PARTICIPANTS

Regional Representatives

- Kathy Daugherty, Woodsy Owl Coordinator, Region 1
- Randy Wilkerson, CE Regional Coordinator, Region 2
- Jean Szymanski, CE Regional Coordinator, Region 3
- Lisa Perez, 2002 Region 4
- Nancy Porter, Fire Prevention Coordinator, Region 5
- Patricia Nasta, Public Affairs Officer of White Mountain National Forest in New Hampshire, Region 9
- Roberta Burzynski, Writer/editor from the North Eastern Area State and Private Forestry and Woodsy Owl Coordinator
- Patrice Carroll, Public Affairs Specialist, Region 9
- Kristi Kantola, Alaska's Regional Interpreter, Region 10

National Representatives

- James S. Barresi, Chair of the National Association of State Foresters CE Committee
- Joan Wehner, Business Manager of the National Association of State Foresters
- Linda Feldman, National Coordinator for the USDA FS New Century of Service Initiative
- Denver James, Assistant Director of the CE Program, USDA FS, Washington Office
- Ann Loose, Director of the CE Program, USDA FS, Washington Office
- Iris Velez, National Symbols Program Manager, USDA FS, Washington Office
- Dianne Daley Laursen, Operations Manager, National Symbols Program, USDA FS, Washington Office detached unit in St. Paul, MN.
- Rebecca Thompson, Summer HACU Intern with the New Century of Service.

Consultants

- Anne Grant, former Contractor for Marketing and Advisory Services for the Woodsy Owl Program
- Pam Godsey, former Manager of the USDA FS CE Program in the Washington Office
- Neil Howe, co-author of the book *"Millennials Rising."* Neil Howe is a senior advisor to the Concord Coalition and senior policy advisor to the Blackstone Group. With graduate degrees from Yale in history and economics, he was a journalist, magazine editor, and foundation policy executive while playing a growing role in the national debate over entitlement reform. He co-authored *"On Borrowing Time,"* about the impact of aging on fiscal policy, and co-edits the Concord Coalition's *"Facing Facts"* newsletter.

Appendix A—WOODSY OWL STRATEGIC PLANNING SESSION PARTICIPANTS Continued

Technical Support

- Margaret Hanson, FS volunteer in the Cooperative Forestry Unit
- India Hall, Office Assistant of the FS, CE Program, Washington Office

Appendix B—WHAT IS GOING WELL WITH THE WOODSY OWL PROGRAM?

Contributions from participants are recorded in this appendix as they were shared during the session.

- Slogan – a lot in it
- Room for creativity
- Positive employee response to new image
- Opportunities and need for an environmental symbol
- Easy to get partnerships because of Woodsy's status
- Web page, activity guides (tools)
- Tie to FS slogan
- Special event visibility
- Teachers love having a CE symbol
- Easy to affiliate symbols with celebrities because of icon status
- Easy to integrate with other educational programs
- Can serve many purposes
- Smokey as entrée for Woodsy – complementary
- Having a combined catalog

Appendix C—THE WORLD WOODSY OWL LIVES IN

Woodsy in the Current Environment

Contributions from participants are recorded in this appendix as they were shared during the session.

American Culture

- Less focus on the environment nationally; popularity of SUV's, etc.
- Adult perception of "owl," spotted owls, endangered species
- Emphasis on sports and competitiveness (parents and kids)
- Overscheduled activities for children
- Increasing number of minorities and new immigrants
- Change in focus of environmental concerns
- Less negative risk taking (crime, drug use, pregnancy)
- More local recreation
- Increased regulation in California due to population increase
- Increasing disconnect between rural and urban populations
- Increase in wealth gap between rich and poor
- Large growth in suburban communities
- Increased philanthropy – corporate

The Political and Governmental Environment

- Appearances with Al Gore and other celebrities at high-profile events
- Change in national political climate
- Downsizing of government, decreasing role in people's lives

Technology and Media

- Decrease in national messaging system (media expansion and bombardment)
- Theme television
- Explosion of characters marketed to kids
- Edutainment marketing
- More entertainment focused on young children
- Popular information bombardment

Appendix C—THE WORLD WOODSY OWL LIVES IN Continued

The Educational Environment

- Kids are more sophisticated
- Emphasis on reading programs and computers
- New generation: team-oriented, service-learning, smart, want to be mentored
- Popular music important to elementary school students (CD's, etc.)
- Teaching directed towards standardized tests and correlation with standards
- Growth of after-school programs
- Increasing length of school day and year
- More emphasis on development programs
- Short attention spans of children
- More children on medication (i.e. Ritalin)
- Increased Science and Math scores; increased emphasis at elementary level
- Males' progression into math and science
- Today's children are visual learners (computers) – don't read as much – children learn in different ways
- Early introduction to eco-issues through the classroom

The Family Environment

- Kids have less unstructured time outdoors
- Becoming more urbanized, kids have less experience outdoors
- Parents taking kids out in the woods (Western US)
- Increased "family values"
- Smaller families
- Increased childhood obesity
- Fewer "family meals"
- Young children look for social solutions and accountability
- "Walk the talk" – children are watching
- More transportation available to children
- Increased demands on parents (time, funding)
- Decreased pressure for career decision at an early age

The FS

- New Century of Service
- Change in FS administration
- Aging FS workforce and upcoming retirements
- FS desire for a FS symbol that represents an advocacy role
- Internal dissatisfaction with Woodsy
- Increase in commercial involvement in curriculum
- Decreased money and resources

Appendix C—THE WORLD WOODESY OWL LIVES IN Continued

- Increase in focused CE funding
- FS reputation not as positive
- Increased positive perception of government and its role
- Internally, constant change and issue focus
- Increased credibility of CE
- Have had a CE staff area since 1999
- Many resources management agency's programs do CE
- Increased emphasis on children coupled with FS interest in CE
- Increased technical challenges to CE (i.e. religion, advocacy)

Appendix D—WHAT NEEDS TO BE IMPROVED IN THE WOODSY OWL PROGRAM?

Contributions from participants are recorded in this appendix as they were shared during the session.

- Lack of other agency involvement
- Continuation/flow between Washington Office and Field Levels
- Monitoring of program effectiveness
- Status, perception
- A champion for Woodsy (Urban Forestry?)
- Organizational structure/design for the program
- Publicize successes
- Negative response to new image
- Cost of costume, wear ability, size, height
- Dissatisfaction with level of recognition of new slogan
- Both slogans still used, need policy clarification
- Prioritization
- CE as a whole is not clear who *delivers the message*
- Tie the message and the program to the mission of the agency
- CE funding focused on Woodsy at local level
- Definition of long-term partners
- Cost of delivery
- Energy is dragging a bit on the program
- Visibility with leadership
- Employees and state foresters embracing Woodsy
- Knowing how to present Woodsy to the public and internal audiences
- Make it easier to use Woodsy Owl
- Professional marketing help
- Clarification of message: “environment” versus “conservation,” “conservation education”
- Target audience identification and recognition
- How Woodsy is to be used?
- Local field champions (internal)
- Limited resources to implement
- Focus on one message
- Competition between Woodsy and Smokey
- Current market research
- Woodsy’s gender unclear?
- Have some Educational Premises and research
- Limitations of an Icon Program
- Marketing of Public Service Announcements
- Internal Network
- Catalog log products and availability

Appendix E—CORE AUDIENCE

Contributions from participants are recorded in this appendix as they were shared during the session.

Core Audience - Tiered Target Audience Considerations

1. Pre-kindergarten to 3rd – Core Audience

- Service Learning Guide
- Educational Products
- Woodsy as Deliverer

2. Rest of Elementary School

- Branding (Slogan and Image)
- Woodsy Owl's message
- Service Learning

3. Middle/High School

- Branding (Slogan and Image)
- Service Learning

4. Adult: College, other segments

- Branding (Slogan and Image)
- Delivery

Pros' and Con's of Core Audience

1. Pros' of considering the Pre-Kindergarten to 3rd Grade as the Core Audience

- Receptive to a character (tool fits)
- Get them young – receptive
- Parents are nostalgic in reference to Woodsy Owl
- Parents have influence
- Fun group to work with
- Easier to design programs for
- Lot of opportunities for partners who already target this age group
- Environmental message can be simple and less controversial.
- Easier to deliver less bias.
- Parents see Woodsy at safe.
- Capacity to take actions.

2. Cons' of considering the pre-Kindergarten to 3rd Grade as Core Audience

- Challenging to develop programs
- Harder to sell the relevancy of this program to management
- Not taken as seriously in the agency

Appendix E—CORE AUDIENCE Continued

- Long term benefit (wait for these kids to grow up)
- Fewer actions these kids can take that tie to our mission
- We have to go to them
- Employees not skilled in talking with 3-8 year olds or preparing materials for them
- Very diffuse approach (pre-schools, pub. Schools, elementary schools)
- Time intensive
- It's a smaller audience
- Risk alienating older age group
- Need someone else's approval (don't access them directly)
- Age 8 may be too old
- Too focused on costume for this age group (as deliverers) at the expense of other methods.
- Expensive and difficult to use the costume
- Tendency to focus on the costume for this age group and to expensive and difficult to use the costume
- Too "childish," not cool

Alternative Audiences

- 3 to 8
- Smaller range
- Longer range
- Tiered

Criteria to Select a Core Audience

- Flexibility
- Take a tiered, focused approach in reference to implementation

Appendix F—VISION FOR THE YEAR 2006

This section shows a “wish list” from participants on what they would like to see the Woodsy Owl program to be or become. Some of the components of this list may sound awkward, but please keep in mind that no specific boundaries were established during the exercise.

The Vision for the Future – *Program Policy and Administration*

By the year 2006:

- There will be a healthy budget that supports a revised program infrastructure and network.
- The Woodsy Owl product line will be financially self-sustaining.
- The Woodsy Owl program will have a full time coordinator at the Washington Office, as well as in each Region, and in every state forestry office.
- FS leadership, government leaders and celebrities will actively seek out Woodsy as a desirable partner in public appearances.
- The non-profit Woodsy Owl Environmental Learning Foundation will have announced a \$5 million bequest from Microsoft.
- Revenue from licensing will subsidize the Woodsy Owl program.
- We will have numerous active partners sharing the development and delivery of Woodsy Owl programs.
- The Woodsy Owl costume will fit a variety of body sizes and shapes, and will have no snaps.
- Woodsy will have a physical image that appropriately supports his message.

The Vision for the Future – *Education Programs*

By the year 2006:

- A Woodsy Owl TV show will have received its second Emmy award for best children’s show.
- The Woodsy Owl website will be actively used in classrooms and at home.
- 10,000 school districts across the country will have links to Woodsy Owl’s website.

Appendix F—VISION FOR THE YEAR 2006 Continued

- Teachers will have access to a local contact that can obtain age-appropriate program materials for them.
- “*The Woodsy Story*” book will be on the New York Times Best Sellers list.
- Masters programs in Environmental Education will use Woodsy Owl as a case study for the first-class delivery of a multicultural CE message.
- Every school will have a daily segment devoted to Environmental Education, using Woodsy Owl materials.
- The Woodsy Owl CE package will be included in the “Ag in the classroom” program.
- Lesson plans will have been developed that meet national scholastic standards, and correlate with state student requirements.

The Vision for the Future – Training

By the year 2006:

- 3 out of 5 educators will have used Woodsy Owl educational materials in their classrooms.
- Woodsy Owl will be featured in the elementary PLT program.
- All National Forest outfitter guides will use the Woodsy Owl program for the environmental education portion of their programs.

The Vision for the Future – Branding

By the year 2006:

- When children ages 8-13 years see Woodsy Owl’s image, they will respond with recognition, warmth and enthusiasm for their ability to participate in resolving natural resources issues.
- There will be a recurring event nationwide where Woodsy Owl is the only well-known icon.
- On every Earth Day, Woodsy will make appearances on national television talks shows with the Chief of the FS, the Secretary of Agriculture and many other significant environmental leaders.

Appendix F—VISION FOR THE YEAR 2006 Continued

- When FS employees and other adults see Woodsy, they will smile and think of their role in caring for the land.
- Woodsy Owl will be associated with the “Adopt a _____” programs.
- Woodsy Owl’s image will be incorporated into the national recycling emblem for paper. All recycling containers will contain Woodsy Owl’s image.
- There will be a Woodsy Owl display in every FS visitor center.
- All college radio stations will use Woodsy Owl’s message as part of their education hour.
- The Woodsy Owl Clean-Up Day will be celebrated by every FS unit nationwide.
- 75% of all children under the age of 10 will recognize Woodsy Owl, and relate him to America’s environmental conscience.

The Vision for the Future – Internal *Marketing*

By the year 2006:

- Woodsy Owl will be utilized and valued by all staff members in all areas in the FS.
- The Woodsy Owl icon will appear on all FS published materials.
- Woodsy Owl, and the history of his program, will be included in the employee orientation program for all FS employees.
- Because of Woodsy Owl’s success, he will become the icon of choice for sharing the New Century of Service concept with children.
- Every Supervisor’s Office, Regional Office, State Office, and Station will have a Woodsy Owl costume.
- There will be a FS award program that recognizes outstanding achievement in CE, and features Woodsy Owl.

Appendix F—VISION FOR THE YEAR 2006 Continued

The Vision for the Future – External *Marketing*

By the year 2006:

- Woodsy Owl Public Service Announcements will be aired on a national basis regularly by the national television networks.
- A Woodsy Owl balloon will become a regular feature in Macy's Thanksgiving Day parade.
- Woodsy Owl will be featured in a series of Public Service announcements with Steve Irwin, stressing the importance of trees for wildlife habitats and survival.
- The National Science Teachers Association will have recently announced their second annual Woodsy Owl Environmental Education Award for elementary science teachers.
- The FS will have numerous active partners sharing in the development and delivery of Woodsy Owl programs.
- Woodsy Owl will be the official environmental mascot of the 2006 Winter Olympic Games.
- Woodsy Owl will be the icon used by national hotel associations for their environmental messages.

The Vision for the Future – Monitoring *and Evaluation*

By the year 2006:

- Everyone will have cleaner water, cleaner air, more recycling, etc. as a result of the Woodsy Owl program.
- The first monitoring report on the Woodsy Owl program and its accomplishments will have been released.